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OCTOBER 28, 1987

A Cahners publication serving the total foodservice industry

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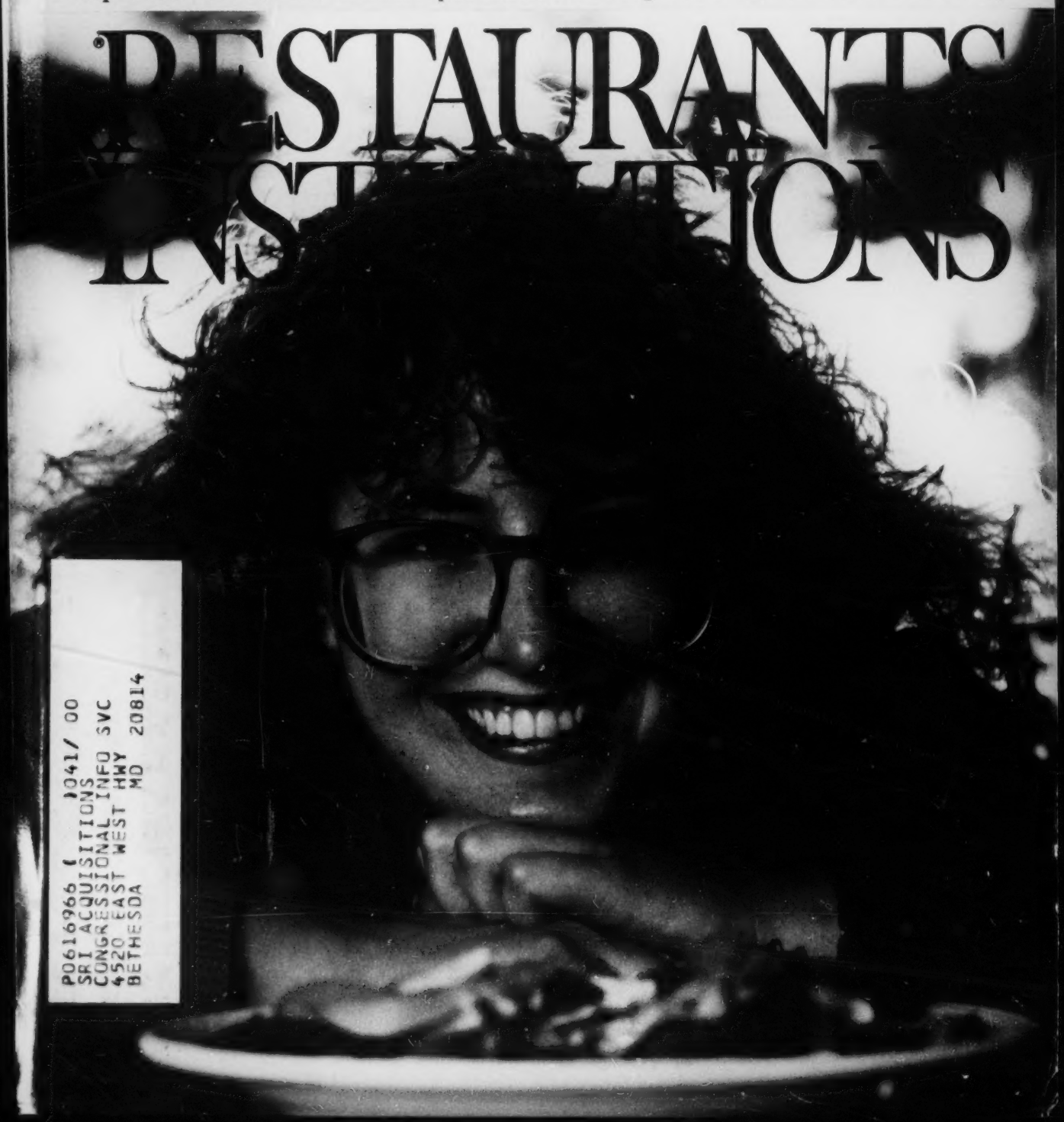

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■ MARKETING

Oriental Fast Food a Mystery

Potential exists, but chains struggle to turn a profit.

Pillsbury is the first to admit it has yet to make a success of Quik Wok. In September, General Mills sold its Minneapolis Leeann Chin units back to the founder and closed the Chicago operations because of disappointing sales.

Why is this last frontier of fast food so hard to conquer? Is the Oriental concept hard to execute in a fast-food environment? Is the public unwilling to accept Oriental fast food?

One thing is sure. The demand is there. Nearly every consumer survey points toward increased interest and demand for Oriental food. But one Chinese fast-food marketing executive questions the frequency factor. While many consumers can eat fast-food hamburgers three or four times a week, how many are inclined to eat moo shoo pork as often?

Another problem for Oriental fast-food operators is competition—the traditional mom-and-pop restaurants. Salaries and overhead are low so the independents can market their products at a lower price. For a sophisticated chain operation to reproduce quality food consistently with a high margin is much more difficult.

"Coming up with consistent quality and operational procedures remains a big problem," says Neal Ostman, formerly the vice president and controller for Quik Wok and now a Dallas accountant.

Educating the customer about the quality of Oriental fast food is another concern. Some now-defunct chains that concentrated more on margin and less on taste have given the segment a bad name.

"Most of our customers think in order to serve Oriental food fast it has already been cooked far in advance and sits in a steam table for a long time, or that it is microwaved," says Harry Karp, another defector from Quik Wok. Karp, now owner of a small San Antonio chain called Wonton Express, says customers can't perceive the product as being fresh.

Convenience will also drive the growth of the segment. When Pillsbury took control of Quik Wok, it learned home delivery was not the answer. The company has shut down delivery units in Texas and Louisiana because they were not generating high enough ticket prices. But Pillsbury is not giving up on the concept and is now concentrating on drive-thru, which is 65% of its business.

In August, Quik Wok introduced its first new product since Pillsbury acquired the concept three years ago. Sales of Chinese fajitas have been encouraging, especially as a drive-thru finger food, and the item is drawing a lot of young customers.

Location, of course, is another key to success. Ostman says, while at Quik Wok, he learned, "If you build in a market where there is already a lot of customer loyalty, you'll run into a fight. We had better success in new suburban areas, in places where people haven't established a preference."

Even with all the concerns, most feel there is a big opportunity to make this segment a success. It is just a matter of engineering the right approach. So far that approach has remained a mystery. —*J.W.*

Wonton Express in San Antonio is meeting sales projections and has aggressive expansion plans.

TRACKING ORIENTAL FAST-FOOD GROWTH

Oriental restaurants are capturing a small but growing share of all the visits made to quick-service operations. While many regional chains are struggling, greater acceptance of the concept on the West Coast helps explain the overall segment growth. Quick-service visits captured by Oriental restaurants:

1984	0.7%
1985	0.9%
1986	1.0%
1987	1.2%

Source: GDR/Crest

LODGING

50 LEADERS IN LODGING

These 50 companies lead the lodging industry in number of rooms. Many are also leaders in the food and beverage arena, feeding hungry travelers not only in their restaurants, but through room service and catering.

■ Thirty percent of the industry's rooms inventories are luxury hotel and resorts, 20% are upscale hotels, 26% are basic, full-service facilities and 24% are economy/limited-service accommodations.

■ Of the 2.7 million lodging operations in the United States, 35% are priced under $45 a night. Forty percent are priced in the affordable $45 to $85 range.

■ Laventhol & Horwath estimates that 64% of all current lodging operations—representing 70% to 75% of industry revenues—are affiliated with chains.

Rank	Organization Headquarters	No. of properties	No. of rooms or beds
1	**Holiday Corp.** Memphis, Tenn.	357,614	1,907
2	**Sheraton Corp.** Boston, Mass.	142,000	508
3	**Ramada Inc.** Phoenix, Ariz.	138,000	575
4	**Hilton Hotels Corp.** Beverly Hills, Calif.	97,535	271
5	**Quality International*** Silver Spring, Md.	95,393	801
6	**Days Inns of America** Atlanta, Ga.	79,000	505
7	**Marriott Corp.** Washington, D.C.	75,277	165
8	**Prime Motor Inns** Fairfield, N.J.	60,000	500
9	**Motel 6*** Santa Barbara, Calif.	45,793	409
10	**Hyatt Hotels Corp.** Chicago, Ill.	45,000	84
11	**AIRCOA** Englewood, Colo.	39,354	175
12	**Inter-Continental Hotels** New York, N.Y.	37,153	98
13	**Hilton International** New York, N.Y.	35,391	90
14	**Westin Hotels & Resorts** Seattle, Wash.	33,147	61
15	**Radisson Hotel Corp.** Minneapolis, Minn.	32,033	129
16	**Econolodges of America*** Charlotte, N.C.	32,000	391
17	**Super 8 Motels Inc.*** Aberdeen, S.D.	25,655	402
18	**La Quinta Motor Inns*** San Antonio, Texas	22,063	176
19	**Red Roof Inns*** Hilliard, Ohio	18,708	164
20	**Hospitality Intl. Inc.** Atlanta, Ga.	18,254	225
21	**Hyatt Intl. Corp.** Chicago, Ill.	15,169	42
22	**Omni Hotels Corp.** Hampton, N.H.	14,389	33
23	**Knights Inns*** Reynoldsburg, Ohio	13,100	118
24	**Servico** West Palm Beach, Fla.	12,489	57
25	**Continental Cos.** Miami, Fla.	11,464	50

*Company has minimal food and beverage operations, or none at all. ©1987 *Hotels & Restaurants International*, a Cahners publication.

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LODGING

SMALL PROPERTIES: HOW THEY'RE DOING

■ **Since January 1986, occupancies for small properties (defined as those with 15 to 75 rooms) have frequently exceeded those for the total industry. Small operations in the New England region were especially strong, showing a 6.4% increase between April 1986 and April 1987. (These data were gathered by Smith Travel Research for the American Hotel & Motel Association.)**

■ **Overall, however, small properties were the only industry segment to show a decline during the first four months of 1986 —0.5%, to be exact. Room rates during that time rose 4.7%. Despite the increase, room rates for small properties consistently fall about $15 below those for the total industry.**

Rank	Organization Headquarters	No. of properties	No. of rooms or beds
26	**Stouffer Hotels** Solon, Ohio	11,193	28
27	**Pratt Hotel Corp.** Dallas, Texas	10,395	33
28	**United Inns** Memphis, Tenn.	10,211	40
29	**Mariner Corp.** Houston, Texas	8,000	26
30	**Tollman-Hundley Hotels** New York, N.Y.	7,963	32
31	**W.B. Johnson Properties** Atlanta, Ga.	7,163	19
32	**Loews Hotels** New York, N.Y.	6,856	14
33	**Brock Hotel Corp.** Irving, Texas	6,627	40
34	**Helmsley/Harley Hotels** New York, N.Y.	6,550	26
35	**Doubletree Hotels** Phoenix, Ariz.	6,144	23
36	**Affordable Inns*** Mount Vernon, Ill.	5,898	54
37	**Marcus Corp.** Milwaukee, Wis.	5,600	45
38	**Interstate Hotels Corp.** Pittsburgh, Pa.	5,600	18
39	**Friendship Inns Intl.*** North Bergen, N.J.	5,500	142
40	**Bally's Grand Hotels Inc.** Las Vegas, Nev.	5,383	3
41	**Drury Inns*** St. Ann, Mo.	5,345	47
42	**Amfac Resorts/Fred Harvey** Flagstaff, Ariz.	5,208	12
43	**Wyndham Hotels** Dallas, Texas	5,187	19
44	**Registry Hotel Corp.** Dallas, Texas	5,000	16
45	**Shoney's Lodging Inc.** Nashville, Tenn.	4,871	39
46	**Sixpence Inns of America** Santa Ana, Calif.	4,678	39
47	**Management Group Inc.** Chicago, Ill.	4,300	15
48	**Park Inns Intl. Inc.** Irving, Texas	4,288	32
49	**Lincoln Hotel Corp.** Dallas, Texas	3,802	13
50	**Imperial Hotels*** Arlington, Va.	3,800	62

*Company has minimal food and beverage operations, or none at all. ©1987 *Hotels & Restaurants International*, a Cahners publication.

FAST-FOOD SECURITY

One of the restaurant industry's biggest dilemmas: Can open access fast-food units find a secure way to do business?

by Richard Hefter

Fast-food chains call it their biggest crime threat. Statistics show it sneaks up once every 27 minutes nationwide and ends in bloodshed 10% of the time.

Lawsuits reveal staggering damage awards. What is the industry doing to stem this armed robbery liability? In this Special Report, *R&I* puts the magnifying glass to security within the quick-hit-prone fast-food industry. Interviews with insiders reveal what works and what doesn't, and expose where companies are most vulnerable to attack and why. What results is a blueprint for protection, a consummate security plan, to ensure the safety of customers and employees, and, ultimately, the success of business . . . .

In a high-crime neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, an employee at Church's Fried Chicken is seriously injured by gunfire during a holdup despite protective glass casing and warning signs designed to deter robbers. What has gone wrong?

A visit to the store indicates the glass sheathing was not built to resist bullets, but rather to bar thieves from jumping over the counter. Moreover, while signs announce the store's limited cash supply, none warn that clerks cannot open the drop safe, a surprise that may have provoked the attack, according to police.

The incident is not isolated. Throughout the country, fast-food restaurants are making critical omissions in their robbery prevention programs, if indeed they have one. At some chains, such as Church's, the oversights are subtle. At others, they are boldfaced, foregoing fundamentals as simple as skimming cash registers.

"Fast-food restaurants are supposed to have tight money management, but we have lots of evidence from armed robbery that they don't," says Joe Mele, instructor at the National Crime Prevention Institute, Louisville, Ky. "They're storing the cash in offices or letting it build up in registers," he adds, citing a recent $1,000 take at a Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Wendy's where three employees were murdered.

The consequences, in addition to bloodshed, can mean gouging damage claims. A 1984 report by University of Maryland Criminology Professor Larry Sherman, for example, shows that security-related liability verdicts throughout the United States numbered 31 in 1982, up from just one in 1958. The average major award increased from $20,000 to more than $1 million during the same period.

As liability applies to the fast-food industry, Marriott Corp., Wash-

FAST-FOOD SECURITY

BULLET RESISTANT ENCLOSURE. Complete with transaction windows using a revolving platter, this virtually disarms the robber. Price: $6,000.

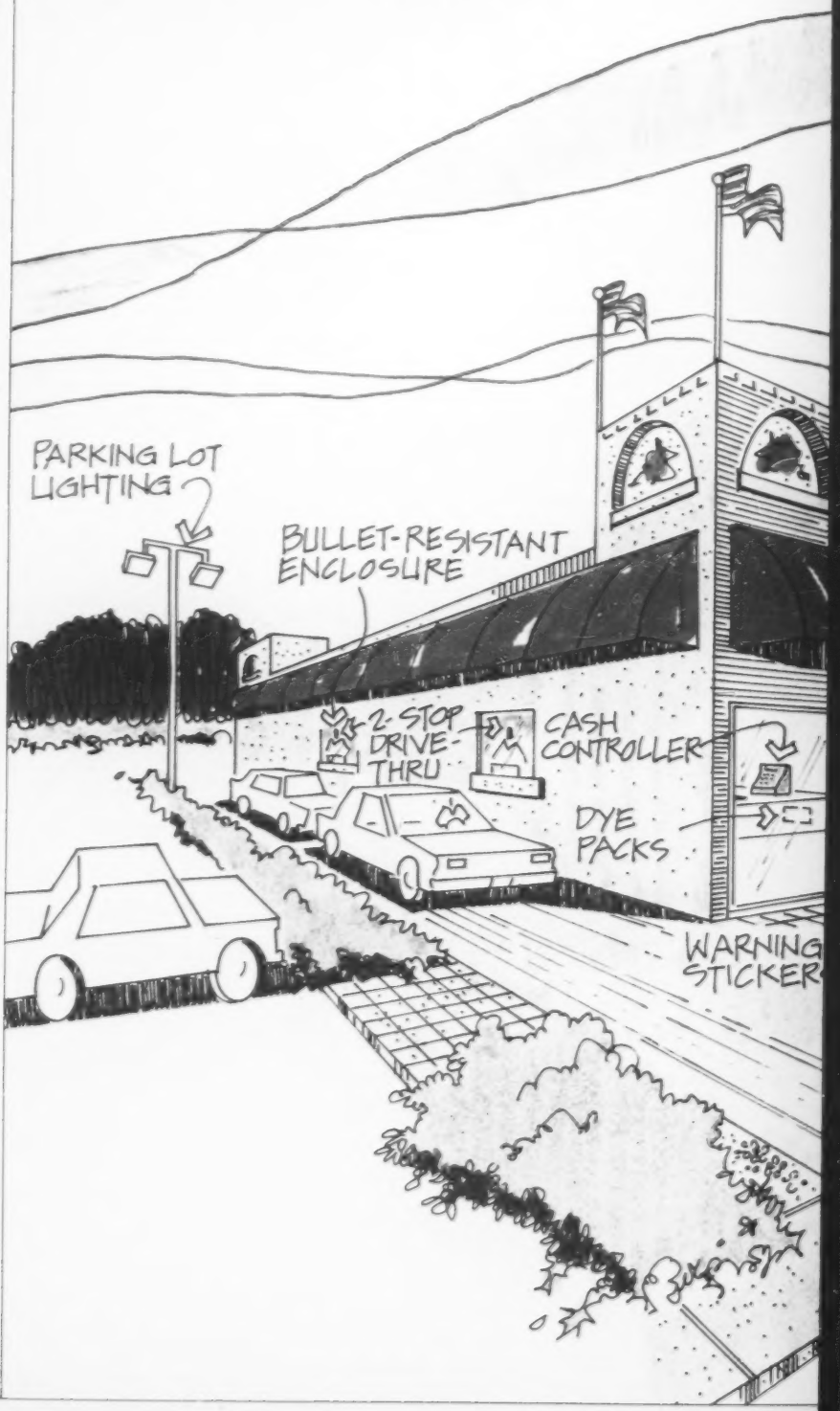
BUZZER/MAGNETIC LOCKS. The ability to activate door locks from behind the counter controls entrance into store and bathroom and immediately seals the building in case of robbery. Price: $300 to $500.

CASH DISPENSER. Various equipment is available to safeguard receipts while dispensing change for operation. Price: $10,000 for drawerless register/safe; $2,000 for money vending machine; $1,500 for time-delay drop-safe. (Cash register extra for last two.)

DYE PACKS. Time-delay, exploding money calls attention to robber when fleeing the store and renders stolen money useless. Price: $3,000 for three packs and transmitting equipment at three exits.

FRONT ENTRANCE. Limiting egress to the front of the building calls attention to escapes.

SECURITY LAYOUT



PARKING LOT LIGHTING. **Good illumination deters night attacks. Price: $200 for 400-watt, high-pressure sodium bulb and housing.**

TWO-STOP DRIVE-THRU. **Using the first window for money transaction slows escape in case of holdup.**

UNOBSTRUCTED WINDOWS. **This, coupled with registers at the front, makes holdups conspicuous to the outside.**

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE. **Cameras and monitors serve as a psychological deterrent and aid in apprehensions. Price: $4,000 to $5,000 for three cameras, recorder and monitor. Add $1,500 to $2,000 for door contacts, motion detectors, fire sensors and silent alarm.**

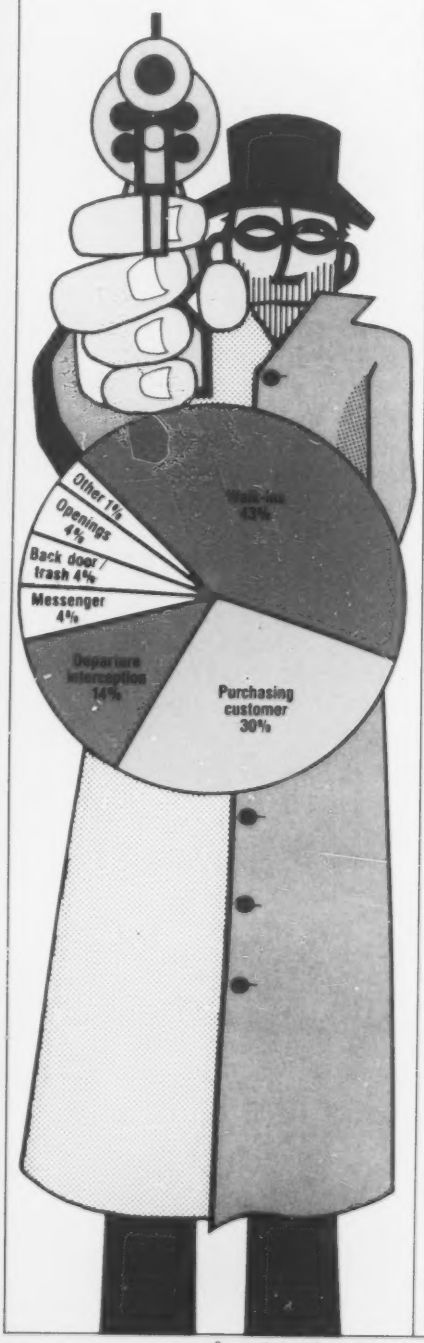
WARNING STICKERS. **Spelling out risks deters crime and avoids mid-robbery surprises that can lead to violence. (Note: Add height measurement charts at exits to aid in suspect descriptions to police.)**

FAST-FOOD SECURITY

HOLD THE SANDWICH

Over-the-counter hits account for almost three-fourths of Long John Silver's robberies. Drive-thru holdups make up less than 1%.

(Method of robbery)



Source: Jerrico Inc., Lexington, Ky.

Security and marketing goals are often at odds; banners covering windows can conceal robbers.

ington, D.C., is one of the latest defendants, currently embroiled in a damage suit seeking more than $1 million following the stabbing death of a Roy Rogers employee. The suit charges negligence in allegedly not informing employees of prior robberies and not taking appropriate countermeasures.

Sometimes, decision-making by security laymen is to blame, according to Ralph Gillespie, sales manager for a Michigan-based manufacturer of bullet-resistant enclosures. In at least one instance, Gillespie notes that a fast-food chain's marketing department was charged with specifying security solutions. "The end result was totally ineffective," he says.

Where a corporate security department exists—many established in only the past few years—marketing still flexes its muscles and interests collide. Often, for example, merchandising signs cover windows that the security department wants clear to make robbers visible from the outside. Or, image-conscious marketing executives interpret security alerts as negative. The result is a loss-prevention program that looks like Swiss cheese.

"You find companies doing one thing or another, (but) all are just parts of the total program," acknowledges Frank McAvoy, former security chief at Church's, now director of corporate loss prevention for Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores Inc., Lebanon, Tenn.

The Southland example

Just what is the "total" robbery prevention program and who has it? McAvoy and others, while allowing for store-specific flexibility, point to Southland Corp. as the model. In fact, many security professionals in the fast-food industry are "graduates" of Southland's program, according to McAvoy, himself a former security manager there.

In 1975, the Dallas-based company began turning around a rampaging robbery problem at its 7-Eleven stores that saw incidents rise 137% in just four years. Adopting recommendations from a study that interviewed ex-convicts, the company reduced robberies by 60% during the next decade, despite added stores and soaring national crime rates. Moreover, injuries and security-related liability lawsuits declined, while suits proliferated nationally.

Southland's four-pronged approach includes:

- Limited operating cash. Robbers indicate that a target's attractiveness diminishes proportionally to the money available. As the booty drops from $200 to $30, interest falls from 100% of those surveyed to just 15%, according to Bud Crow, advisor at Athena Research Corp., Wilson, Wyo., and co-author of the Southland study.

Accordingly, as Lloyd Scott, Southland's corporate security manager, explains, policy requires that clerks keep less than $50 in the till during the day, $30 at night. All excess receipts and any bills over $10 ($5 at night) are stored in a type of time-delay safe. "We find the big bills are an attraction to the potential robber who usually cases the store first to see how much we have," Scott says.

The safe is located near the counter and designed with a drop slot for clerks to conveniently insert large denominations. Unique, it dispenses canisters of coins or bills like a vending machine, except at a rate of one every several minutes. "It's quick enough to keep operations smooth, slow enough to deter the time-constrained robber," Scott says.

- Advertise security measures. Supporting these controls are signs that spell out risks to robbers and help avoid surprises that can stir violence. "We operate the stores under the premise that there are no secrets," Scott says. Explains Crow: "A security measure will only prevent crime if the criminal knows it's there." He adds that in a high turnover business, secrets are difficult to keep anyway.
- Put the would-be robber on stage. Crow's research found that anonymity is the third most important concern to robbers considering whether or not to steal. Risks are higher if the holdup point is within plain view of the street.

In response, Southland moved its 7-Eleven registers up front near large, clear, ceiling-high windows, according

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FAST-FOOD SECURITY

Posted warnings of security measures, such as time-delay safes, are proven crime deterrents.

to Scott. Engineers are directed to plan for balanced lighting that allows visibility looking outside and in at night, he adds.

Employees, too, participate in the stage concept by being attentive to customers. This not only deters identification-conscious thieves, it appeals to honest clients, according to Scott. Adds Francis D'Addario, another Southland graduate and present director of security at Jerrico Inc., Lexington, Ky.-based operators of Long John Silver's Seafood Shoppes: "When you build sales, particularly late night when robbers thrive on empty stores, you also boost prevention."

■ Protect people over property. If robbery prevention fails, clerks are trained on the principle of avoiding injury at all costs. Policy, strictly enforced, dictates that employees cooperate fully with robbers, as resistance accounts for four in five commercial robbery killings, according to Crow.

On one recent occasion, a clerk at a Fort Worth, Texas, 7-Eleven ran out to get the license plate number of a getaway car and was assaulted. A few days later he got word that he was fired for violating corporate policy.

Restaurant response

While the fast-food industry applauds these security measures, it is not quick to adopt them in full. In the crucial area of cash control, for example, few companies appear to use drop safes, leaving large bills in the cash register. Of a dozen chains visited in Chicago's top robbery districts, just four demonstrated they keep $20 bills out of the till.

At several, signs warned of "Drop Safe in Use," not indicating if the safe is the time-delay type that clerks cannot open. Some aren't. Baskin Robbins USA, for instance, uses a drop box without the delayed lock, according to Don Roberts, director of loss prevention at the Glendale, Calif.-based ice cream chain. The difference is compactness and price that is less than half the $1,500 time-delay safe. "It's some-

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BITING FROM THE HAND

The estimate ranges from a third to one half. That's the portion of robberies in which employees or ex-hires are in cahoots with the bad guy, according to fast-food industry security managers.

Sometimes it is full-blown collusion, other times it is sharing of information. But one thing is clear. Young, high-turnover, neighborhood workers bite from the same hand that feeds them.

"We're keying heavily on employee screening because of that," says Jerrico's Francis D'Addario. "We're putting a priority on hiring employees with verifiable references, both hourlies and managers."

Some red flags on employment applications:

★ References not professionally related.

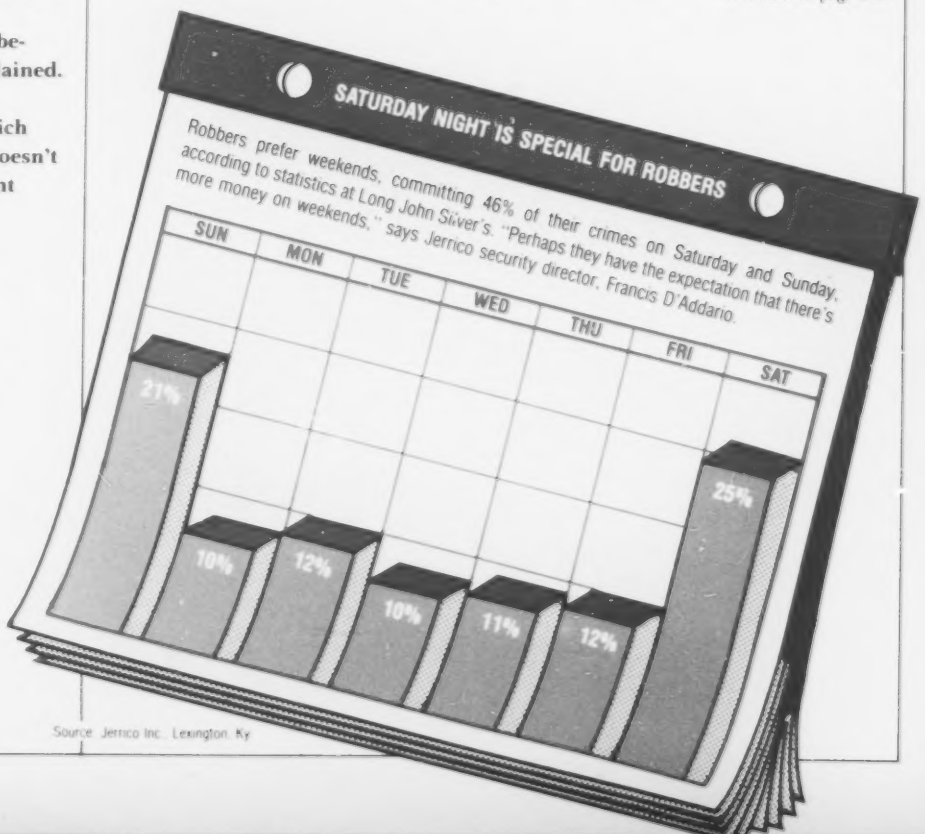
★ Addresses fictitious. (Use old telephone directories and the county clerk's office.)

★ Applicant skips portion asking if convicted of a crime.

★ Dates conflict or intervals between employment are unexplained.

★ Application not signed.

★ Social Security prefix—which identifies state of issuance—doesn't match the state where applicant claims to reside.



FAST-FOOD SECURITY

Pursuit of profits instead of concern for customers is frowned upon by juries.

'FREEBIES' FOR CLOSING AND CASH TRANSFERS

Robberies don't limit themselves to store hours or even store property. They frequently hit at closing and occasionally during runs to the bank. Joe Mele, instructor at the National Crime Prevention Institute, Louisville, Ky., offers these suggestions.

At closing:

One employee should go outside to keep watch of the premises, resting in a car until the others have cleaned up and gone. That way, there are people both inside and out to call for help should there be an attack.

"We've had cases where they all leave together and someone sticks a gun in an ear and herds them all inside and robs the safe," Mele says.

When transferring money to the bank:

- **Vary time of deposit by at least an hour.**
- **Disguise the deposit in something other than a big bank bag.**
- **Vary the route to the bank.**
- **Take someone with you.**
- **If you drive, vary the vehicle.**

"These are 'freebies,'" Mele emphasizes. "They don't cost you a cent."

thing I don't have any control over," Roberts says.

Nevertheless, the company has pioneered a unique cash register that is drawerless, denying access to even operating cash. An employee deposits customers' cash, and the machine automatically returns the correct change. Still cost-restrictive at $10,000, the unit, sold through a Baskin Robbins subsidiary, has helped several franchises eliminate losses.

Where chains cannot be observed dropping large bills, they may still periodically be skimming the registers and depositing receipts in a central safe. This can be effective if the till cash does not accumulate and the safe lock is either time-delay or controlled by an armored car service, according to George Ralph, national director of protective services, Domino's Pizza, Ann Arbor, Mich. Evidence: Domino's reduced robberies from 58 to five between two 10-month periods at 42 selected stores.

Visits also revealed that many fast-food restaurants fail to heed Southland's model for store layout. Understandably, higher volume sit-down stores tend to locate register counters towards the back to accommodate added seating. But some go as far as designing obscure side entrances that facilitate discreet escape. They downsize and tint windows or otherwise block them with large merchandising banners. And they install decorative walls and plants that conceal the transaction area, inviting low-profile-conscious robbers.

Defending such decor at Wendy's, Wayne Isaacs, director of assets protection, says: "You could design a restaurant similar to Fort Knox and always control robbery. But could you make it profitable?"

Professor Sherman, also editor of Washington, D.C.-based Security Law Newsletter, says juries frown upon such reasoning. He cited a case outside of the fast-food industry where a Texas jury awarded $100,000 in damages against a firm that managed a garage where a woman was robbed. The court stated the company, in neglecting to hire a garage attendant at night, demonstrated "an overriding concern with revenue, as distinguished from customer safety."

Indeed, failure to provide "reasonable care" leading to the injury of guests, no matter the tax on profits, is

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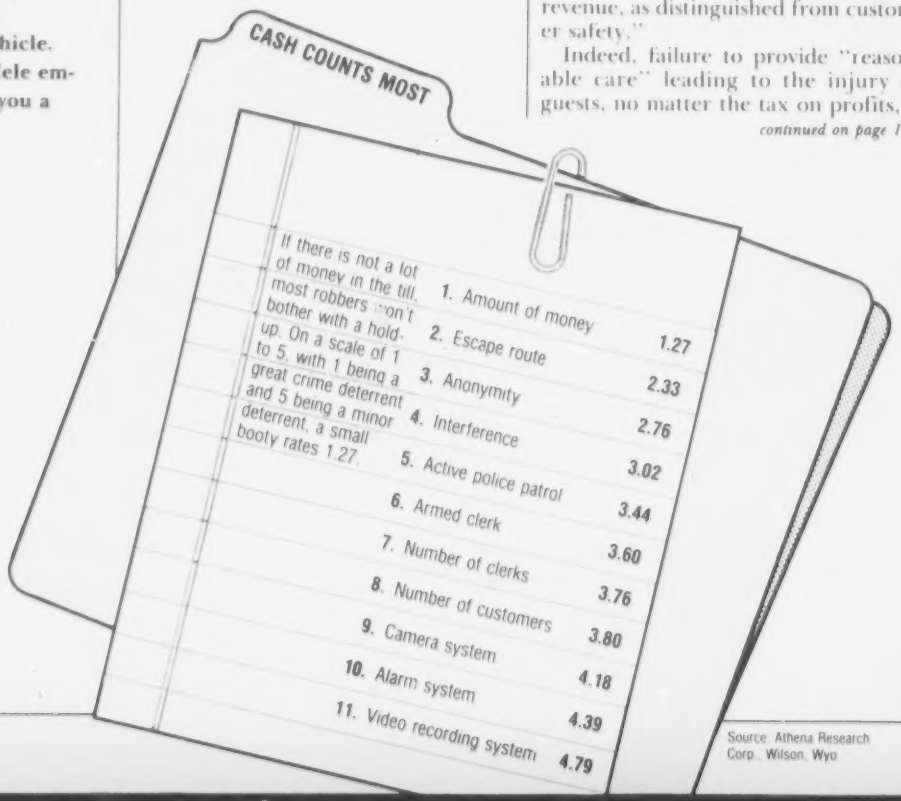

CASH COUNTS MOST
If there is not a lot of money in the till, most robbers won't bother with a holdup. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being a great crime deterrent and 5 being a minor deterrent, a small booty rates 1.27.
1. Amount of money 1.27
2. Escape route 2.33
3. Anonymity 2.76
4. Interference 3.02
5. Active police patrol 3.44
6. Armed clerk 3.60
7. Number of clerks 3.76
8. Number of customers 3.80
9. Camera system 4.18
10. Alarm system 4.39
11. Video recording system 4.79

Source: Athena Research Corp., Wilson, Wyo

FAST-FOOD SECURITY

Security is an art; the tools of the trade include safes, cameras, alarms and dye-rigged cash.

reason enough to convict defendants in a damage suit, according to Anthony Marshall, attorney and dean of Florida International University's School of Hospitality Management. "Reasonable care," he says, means foreseeing crimes and instituting documented measures that a jury, hearing expert witnesses on both sides, deems standard by the industry.

In the final category—robbery response —visits by a reporter cannot determine how fast-food employees are performing, but at least one chain recently was caught off guard. Church's is fighting a $200,000 lawsuit over alleged employee actions during a robbery-turned-assault at a Charlotte, N.C., store. Victims charge that the clerk, while being held up, called out to a departing customer to phone the police, prompting the robbers to attack.

Security an "art"

As the fast-food industry tackles the armed robbery and related liability problems, it also needs to consider approaches that supplement the Southland model. Cases exist where even the best cash controls, the most advertised security alerts, the ultimate layout and most comprehensive training fall short.

As D'Addario explains: "Loss prevention is not a science, but an art. Be flexible." In-house or police surveys of stores, plus hotlines for reporting incidents to headquarters help stay abreast of crime dynamics, he says.

For example, many armed robberies are drug-related, and, as fixes cheapen, as seen with "crack," junkies might accept dollar grabs under reasonable operating levels. "If you're in an area where $15 in the till is all it takes to be hit, at that point you better examine other responses, like closed circuit television (CCTV)," McAvoy adviss.

Adds Ken Grover, director of security for foodservice management at Marriott: "The majority of robberies can be prevented without equipment, but if there's a history of repeated robberies, then you have to resort to things like dye packs."

Dye packs—electronic devices hidden inside wads of bills—explode when activated by transmitters at exits, rendering the money useless and calling attention to the getaway. Like CCTV, they are part of a pantheon of sophisticated countermeasures that include magnetic door locks, bullet-resistant enclosures and silent alarms.

Success stories with these added measures are impressive. McAvoy reports that at Church's units with the enclo-

MAKING IT THROUGH

A clerk who resists or otherwise arouses a robber is 49 times more likely to be killed than one who cooperates, according to Bud Crow, advisor at Athena Research Corp., Wilson, Wyo. Crow, who holds a doctorate degree in social psychology, offers these tips for surviving a robbery:

★ Don't delay. The longer it takes the more nervous the robber.

★ Don't fight back, not even with a weapon. "Weapons can endanger yourself, passers-by and even the robber who may not warrant the death penalty."

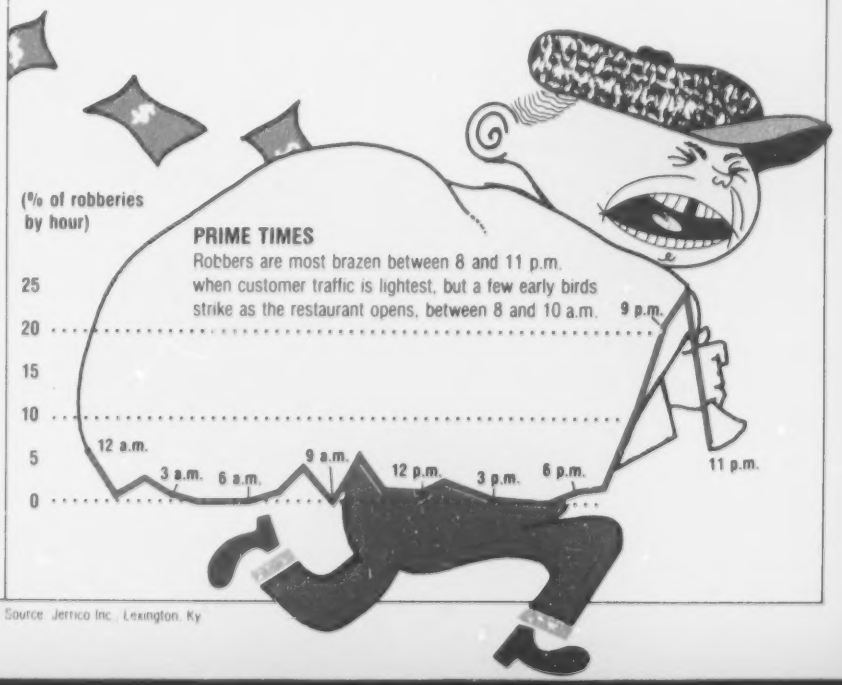
★ Warn of any surprises. "If someone is in back, or expected soon, or if you must reach or move in any way, tell the robber what to expect, so he won't be startled into shooting."

★ Offer to lie down. This may solve the robber's problem of what to do with you after the heist (such as tying you up or knocking you down).

★ Don't chase or follow. Robbers shoot at pursuers.

Beyond these instructions, Crow advises training employees mentally to control the adrenalin flow and involuntary movement that occurs during a robbery. The Post-Traumatic Treatment Center in Aurora, Colo., offers advice and referral on such training.

As for violence that ensues despite these measures (and despite signs announcing time-delay safes): "The robbers I interviewed were just as bewildered by these few senseless killings as we lay people are," Crow says.



Source: Jerrico Inc., Lexington, Ky.

FAST-FOOD SECURITY

Robbery often costs a fast-food operator more than money; a tarnished image may result.

WHERE THE MONEY IS

Lambasting cash control in the fast-food industry, one loss prevention specialist told *R&I*: "Robbers sometimes milk more out of the restaurants than they do from banks."

To see for itself, *R&I* obtained last year's robbery records from 10 fast-food chains from Chicago police under the Freedom of Information Act.

Losses were not suprising. Average heists ranged from $171 to $1,452, with the median at about $350, and the high at $5,400. Baskin Robbins and Kentucky Fried Chicken ranked best, Arby's and Wendy's the hardest hit.

Statistics are conservative, according to police, because stores tend to underreport to keep high loss figures out of the newspapers. For example, about one in six loss figures quoted $0. Other statistics: Six percent indicated someone had been hurt during the robbery. Injuries were reported only at Baskin Robbins, Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonald's, where people were hurt in one in five robberies.

The remaining chains in the survey were Taco Bell, Church's, Popeyes, Burger King and Brown's.

sures robberies fell from 56 to just three at a handful of hard-hit Detroit stores between two 10-month periods. Long John Silver's reduced robbery losses 79% in one year by installing time-delay safes and holdup alarms at selected stores in Houston.

"You're not only creating a situation that makes the robber wait for the big money, you're adding the technology to send a silent signal that a robbery is in progress," D'Addario says.

Security specialists urge that employees be properly trained to use and manage equipment and that decision-makers invest carefully. As the Church's shooting incident in Chicago illustrates, equipment investments can backfire. Warns McAvoy: "Enclosures that are not bullet-resistant, used as jump barriers, are completely useless—positively dangerous—if your purpose is to stop armed robberies."

In another example at which security experts shudder, Jiffy Mart gas and convenience stores in New Orleans use magnetic locks on exit doors to keep thieves from escaping, according to John d'Hemecourt, president of U.S. Gas Corp., the mart owners. Clerks, spotting theft from behind protective glass, activate the locks and call police.

Crime prevention instructor Mele cautions that this approach can invite violence. "You want to lock them out, not in." The purpose, he says, is to keep robbers—fleeing police—from re-entering the store and taking hostages.

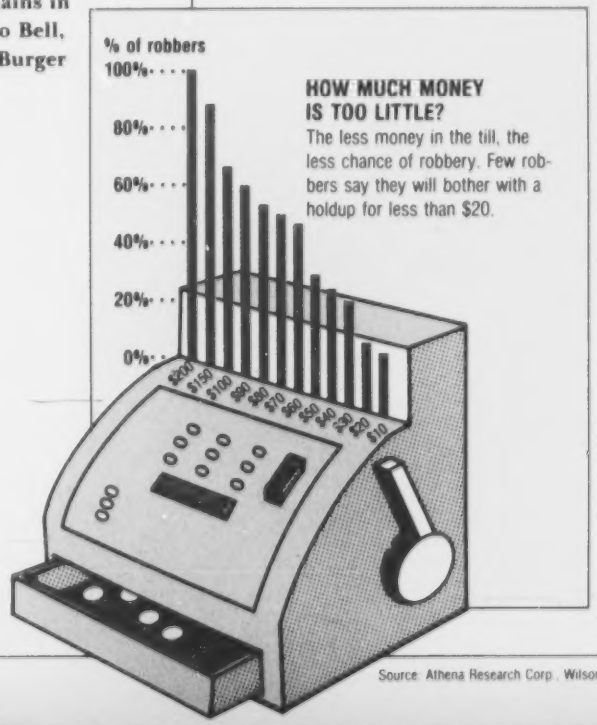
Caveats extend to CCTV cameras and monitors, which serve as psychological deterrents and aid in apprehensions. Crow points to common shortcuts, such as installing fake cameras, which robbers can detect. "They learn from employees who intentionally or inadvertently spill the store's secrets," he says.

One supplemental countermeasure that is not equipment-related is use of armed guards, which the Southland school tries to avoid. Scott says 7-Eleven employs them at only one store primarily to control a shoplifting and loitering problem. Indeed, the practice is rare, as visits in Chicago found it at only one chain, McDonald's.

While attorney Marshall says he recommends guards—minus the gun—only to stem parking lot liability. Adds McAvoy: "They get you in a whole lot more trouble than they get you out of." For example, Pizza Hut was socked for $500,000 in damages after a shootout between robbers and a guard left one customer dead. Incidentally, McDonald's had the highest injury-per-robbery rate (20%) of 10 fast-food chains in Chicago in 1986—statistics that police furnished to *R&I* under the Freedom of Information Act.

There is no absolute security program, no guaranteed defense against robberies, injuries and damage suits. But lessons can be learned. And a combination of the Southland model plus store-specific adjustments can increase the success rate. D'Addario puts it simply: "Spot the vulnerability lest robbers and victims do it for you. Then apply policies and hardware that have proven to work."

The investment may not appear to pay off immediately. In fact, security countermeasures can cost substantially more than the initial robbery loss itself. But as Crow notes: "When robberies begin to tarnish your image, then the bottom line becomes clear."



HOW MUCH MONEY IS TOO LITTLE?
The less money in the till, the less chance of robbery. Few robbers say they will bother with a holdup for less than $20.

Source: Athena Research Corp., Wilson, Wyo.

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